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We think the professional military leaders have been gaining steadily in prestige and influence since Stalin's death. Their views on defense matters are probably by now very important in policy-making. On the other hand, we have no evidence as yet to suggest that the Army has become an independent political force. Our latest information shows the KGB still controlling military counter-intelligence, and recent personnel appointments in the KGB seem to us to show the personal influence of Khrushchev.

As for the Party Secretariat, while it may have gone through a low period immediately after Stalin's death, its status seems to have begun to rise almost as soon as Khrushchev was formally appointed First Secretary, in September 1953.

I agree with you, though, that there is a tendency on the part of the press, and perhaps even in official estimates, to simplify the present political situation by exaggerating Khrushchev's political power. He has worked himself into a position where at the present moment he is the leading spokesman for the majority opinion in the party Presidium. We think this makes him the most influential man in the Soviet Union today, but we are pretty sure he is not able to call the shots in the arbitrary Stalin style.

I am appending two papers, one on the subject of the present political power position of the army, and the other our best reconstruction so far of the Malenkov affair.

ROBERT AMORY, JR.

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